

September 2
1926

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS'
MILLENNIAL STAR

ESTABLISHED IN 1810

"Be not ashamed, neither confounded; but be admonished in all your high-mindedness and pride, for it bringeth a snare upon your souls." DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS 90: 17.

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THE M. I. A. SLOGAN, 1926-27*

WE STAND FOR A TESTIMONY OF THE DIVINE MISSION OF
JOSEPH SMITH

DR. JOHN A. WIDTSOE

OF THE COUNCIL OF THE TWELVE

BRETHREN AND SISTERS: When we contrast the humble beginning of the Church with this great gathering of M. I. A. workers, we have another evidence that this work is "a marvelous work and a wonder." The testimony meeting held this morning was remarkable. In it there was no exhibition of a worn-out theology; rather, it seemed to me as if there streamed forth from every speaker the living power that humanity needs for full happiness in life. I pray that while I stand before you I may not depart from the spirit of this conference, and that I may speak worthily of the slogan that has been adopted for the next M. I. A. year.

A RESTORER AND TEACHER

I know of no greater theme than Joseph Smith, except that of Jesus Christ. Last year our slogan dealt with the divinity of Jesus Christ. This year "We stand for a testimony of the divine mission of Joseph Smith." It is very fitting that this should be our coming slogan, for Joseph Smith claimed to be a restorer of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. At no time did he declare that he brought new truth to the world; his mission was to restore and to declare and expound and enlarge the old truth, which has

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always belonged to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and most of which, possibly, had been revealed in earlier dispensations.

Joseph Smith, while a restorer, was also a great interpreter of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Gospels which have come to us in the Holy Bible are but outlines of the work of the Saviour, and of His teachings; and the commentaries by the Apostles, which constitute the remaining part of the New Testament, are fragmentary and incomplete. Joseph, the Prophet, came in this day and gave to the world a large and rich interpretation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ; he made the teachings of the Saviour clear to all, and he showed how the Gospel, devised for human joy, may be applied every day in the affairs of mankind.

JOSEPH SMITH, THE ISSUE

This slogan is particularly fitting, now or at any time, because Joseph Smith is after all the great issue of "Mormonism." Once convinced that Joseph Smith was divinely inspired, a person may accept all of "Mormonism", all of the truths that the Prophet revealed to the world. Keen students of "Mormonism", those who have shown themselves honest and fearless, declare without exception that Joseph Smith is the central figure of the Church. To Joseph Smith came the marvelous first vision; upon Joseph Smith the Priesthood was conferred; he translated the Book of Mormon by "the gift and power of God"; it was he who was directed by the Lord to organize the Church; and then, through him was revealed the body of doctrine for the guidance of the Church. Those who have studied him without prejudice have without exception come to the conclusion that once he is accepted as a man who saw God and who was directed by the Lord, the principles that he taught must also be accepted as being of divine origin.

BAFFLES THE WISE

The achievements of Joseph Smith are of such a nature, so much greater than those of ordinary men, that they transcend ordinary human powers, and cannot be explained in terms of common experience. In my reading I have found many men, not members of the Church, who have made that very statement. They have stood baffled before the power of Joseph Smith. We quote frequently the statements of Josiah Quincy, famous mayor of Boston, of an illustrious family of Massachusetts, who visited Joseph Smith, in 1844, soon after young Quincy had graduated from Harvard college. In his old age this highly educated man, who had learned to know the world, the nature of greatness and the ways of mortality, told the story of his meeting with Joseph Smith. He closed his story with these words:

I have endeavoured to give the details of my visit to the "Mormon" Prophet with absolute accuracy. If the reader does not know just what

to make of Joseph Smith I cannot help him out of the difficulty. I myself stand helpless before the puzzle.

Joseph came untaught by man, into a world which stood in darkness, and did work which cannot be understood or interpreted by common means. This is the man whom we are to consider throughout this year.

HOW TO WIN A TESTIMONY

I assume that my assignment requires that I discuss the method by which the officers of the M. I. A. may help our young people acquire a testimony of the divine mission of Joseph Smith. I know of no way save one by which a testimony, a living, permanent, enduring testimony, may be won by any man. If I have read Joseph Smith aright, I think that in his own life he has given us the key. If we are to obtain a testimony of any truth we must learn to understand that truth; then we must practise it, and before and during the study and practice we must be in close communion with our Heavenly Father and pray to Him for help. Thus, by prayer, study and practice the testimony of the truth will come to us as an inspiration and gift from God. I am of the earnest opinion that if any man will study the life and works of Joseph Smith, will practise that which he taught, and at the same time pray to God for guidance, he will come out of the search with a living testimony of the divine mission of the Prophet Joseph Smith. When a man does his part, then a testimony comes as a gift of God. Naturally, however, a man must desire to know the truth, though it conflict with all his former beliefs, to obtain the precious testimony, the indestructible knowledge of the truth of the Gospel.

THE HIGH ORDER OF HIS LIFE

It will help our young people in establishing their testimonies of the divine mission of this great man to point out that Joseph Smith, viewed at any point, from every angle, in any position, always measures up to the demands of truth, as revealed in human experience. For example, his personal life was that of a prophet. He lived just as the prophets of old have lived, misunderstood, hounded, persecuted, and at last his life was taken. His life reads as do the lives of some of the prophets told of in Holy Writ or elsewhere. His experience was that of every teacher who attempts to turn men and women from their easy paths of near truth into the walks of full truth. Physically, he was a magnificent man; in spirit, in spite of persecution, disaster and poverty, he was kindly and gentlemanly. He was courageous, and he dared to battle for the right. All who knew him have testified to the kindly strength, mingled with undaunted courage, that made him a great soul. He tells how he lived:

Sectarian priests cry out concerning me and ask: "Why is it that

this babbler gets so many followers and retains them?" I answer: "It is because I possess the principle of love. All that I offer the world is a good heart and a good hand."

TRUTH, HIS WEAPON AND REWARD

No personal reward such as men usually seek was in his work. The fact that he went through life gladly, meeting difficulties without hesitation, and asking for no personal consideration, is another evidence of his sincerity and his unselfish devotion to that which he held to be the eternal truth. To possess truth was his reward.

A man who visited Nauvoo, about 1843, wrote a book about the Prophet in which he said:

If anything can tend to encourage the supposition that Joseph Smith was a sincere enthusiast, and that he had strong and invincible faith in his own high pretensions and divine mission, it is the probability that unless supported by such feelings, he would have renounced the unprofitable and ungrateful task, and sought refuge from persecution and misery in private life and honourable industry. . . . It cannot be denied that he was one of the most extraordinary persons of his time, . . . whose name, whatever he may have been whilst living, will take its place among the notabilities of the world.

His life was significant to all who met him, because he spoke as one who possessed truth. He declared, over and over again, that his weapon was truth; and in a splendid passage handed down to us he says:

I combat the errors of ages; I meet the violence of mobs; I cope with illegal proceedings from excessive authority; I cut the Gordian knot of powers and meet the problems of universities, with truth—diamond truth.

A MATERIAL BUILDER

Joseph Smith was an outstanding material leader. Those who know the history of Kirtland know what a tremendous labour was there accomplished by the Prophet. He founded Nauvoo, the largest city of its time in Illinois, with schools and university and the other factors of civilisation. He built Temples, and he laid out cities; he planned for the temporal welfare of his people, through agriculture and other industries. He looked into the future and saw, as no other man of his generation, the possibilities of the great West, and he recognised the West as a necessary part in the building of our Republic. He asked the Government to give him a hundred thousand men for western conquest, so that the way might be opened for the settlement of the country beyond the Rocky Mountains. He laid bare before the people of that day the western development, which actually has happened.

The Church that he organised, compact and serviceable to all, the manner of its growth and development, the firmness with which the members cling to it, all in the face of furious opposition, come as evidences of the power of the Prophet. To-day, men of thought give consideration to the fruits of the Church and admit that its structure is well nigh perfect. More and more the power of the Church to help and direct its members in all righteous endeavours is being recognised.

THE SPIRITUAL TEACHER

However, other men have been of pure character; other men have done great material deeds; other men have built institutions that have lasted throughout the years. Not by such tests is built a testimony of the divine mission of the Prophet Joseph Smith. They only confirm the larger truths. His greatness lies in his mission as an incomparable spiritual leader. Four events form the corner-stones of evidence of the divine inspiration of the Prophet Joseph Smith.

First, the initial vision, when he was fourteen years old, in which God in person declared to him: "This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!" At that time in the history of the world God had become an attenuated spirit, spread throughout the universe, nowhere present, everywhere present, nothing in particular and everything in general. In such a theological age the Prophet Joseph Smith declared that he had seen God, a person, who had spoken to him. He taught that men may communicate with God, and that God does speak to His children. It was like a shaft of light in the dark cloud of error. It was a message, whether acknowledged or not by those not of us, which has shaken civilisation and mankind since that day in 1820. His testimony is with us:

It is the first principle of the Gospel to know for a certainty the character of God, and to know that we can converse with Him as one man converses with another.—I know God. I have gazed upon the glory of God and the visions of eternity.—The glory of God is intelligence.

Such knowledge was the dire need of the world.

Second, the translation of the Book of Mormon. This book sets forth that the Lord lets His love rest in more than one place; that all men are His children; that He speaks in many ways and to divers people, according to His own mind and will; and that there are Scriptures besides those which have been revealed in the Bible. The Book of Mormon came as a new revelation to the world, in full harmony with the revelation of God Himself to man, in the first vision. In the Book of Mormon is the pure Gospel of the Son of Man, freed from the errors of translation and corruption that have attended other such books. The

integrity of the book, its doctrines, its historical data—all form evidence of its divine origin.

Third, the establishment of the Church. It is an organisation resting on divine authority, which declares that there is a great purpose running through human life, and that the Lord looks after the working out of that great purpose, and in so doing has ordained men with power and authority to carry out His purposes. Thus, the "Mormon" Prophet set up a Church with divine authority, under direct instruction from the Almighty. Uncertainty was removed; certainty was established; Priesthood traceable to God was restored, and the Church established was God-made, not man-made. Just such a message was needed by a world with a diversity of churches representing the personal opinions of the founders.

Fourth and finally, the body of doctrine contained in the revelations given through the Prophet Joseph Smith, full of wonderful truths, are particularly marvelous, because each revelation says or implies: "Thus saith the Lord." They are not the words of Joseph Smith; they are not his opinions; they are not the doctrines he thought would be good; but they are the words of the Almighty. In them the Lord directs, through the Prophet Joseph, that this is to be done, or that this is the truth.

These four corner-stones if properly built upon will enable any honest soul who prays, then studies and practises the truths they contain, to secure an abiding knowledge of the truth of the mission of Joseph Smith. Each one reveals a power beyond that of man.

THE DOCTRINAL TEACHER

Joseph Smith was greatest as a doctrinal teacher. All that he taught is strictly Biblical. Opponents who attempt to unhorse us by quoting the Bible never succeed. Whoever has tried it once, seldom tries it again. The doctrine of the Bible is the doctrine of the restored Gospel. Moreover, the doctrine of the restored Gospel is a comprehensive, complete and well organised system of thought; a philosophy, not a set of unrelated doctrinal laws—the Word of Wisdom here, tithing there, something else somewhere else—but a series of principles that are so held together that they have a beginning and an end, and form one coordinated, complete whole. I know of no other religious system that is so complete, or even approaches the completeness of the "Mormon" doctrine.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

BLESSINGS may appear under the shape of pains, losses and disappointments, but let us have patience, and we will see them in their proper figure.—J. ADDISON.

GOSPEL TEACHINGS*

AMERICA THE LAND OF ZION

WE BELIEVE . . . that Zion will be built upon this [the American] continent.

TWO GATHERING PLACES. Two gathering places for the people of God are plainly specified in ancient and modern Scripture. Jerusalem is to be reestablished and Zion to be rebuilt. Scriptural passages denoting the two as separate habitations are plentiful. (See Micah 4: 2, Joel 3: 16, Zech. 1: 17, Isa. 40: 9.)

"ZION" ON THE EASTERN HEMISPHERE. Early mention of Zion in the Bible is in connection with David, when he was crowned king of Israel. The Jebusites who inhabited Jerusalem declared that only on certain conditions should David come into the city. "Nevertheless David took the strong hold of Zion: the same is the city of David." There David erected his palace. There, later, Solomon built his temple, and the city became the centre of Hebrew worship, government, and national life. To this day the Jews look forward to the redemption of this land as their inheritance and future Zion. Within the site of the city itself was a hill that was also called Zion.

There was, however, before this period, a city named Zion. In Genesis we read that Enoch walked with God; and in the Pearl of Great Price we are told that this same Enoch built a city, which was called a city of holiness, and because the people were of one heart and one mind God called it Zion. (See Gen. 5: 24, Pearl of Great Price, Moses 7: 18-21.)

A metaphorical application of the term is also in current use—by which the Church of God is called Zion, comprising, as the Lord has revealed, the pure in heart.

PROPHECIES CONCERNING AMERICA AS THE LAND OF ZION. Many of the prophets were shown in vision the Zion of the latter days. Isaiah saw that Zion was to be built in a mountainous region, afar off, that the righteous should dwell on high, and that their place of defense should be the munitions of rocks. (Isaiah 33: 16, 17.) "See ye when he lifteth up an ensign on the mountains," he cried.

Isaiah and Micah were one in voicing this joyful word as to the future:

And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.

(Continued on page 557)

*This article is for use in the course of study of the Relief Societies on the second meeting night in September.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 1926

EDITORIAL

IN THE PRIME OF YEARS

How old is he? Such question may be replied to by a mere specification of so many years; and such answer may be very unsatisfying if the inquiry was intended to bring forth facts as to the physical and mental development of the man. Time is a component but not the sum-total of age. The new-born babe is a helpless little creature; left to itself it would surely die; if properly tended it acquires the ability of independent action, and becomes capable of doing purposeful service.

In the natural order the individual reaches a time—rather say state or condition—known as the prime of life, when the attributes of body and mind are at their best. Then comes the inevitable decline, incident to the wearing out of the physical structure. Some grow old early, while others stay young late. Right living, which means righteous living, hastens and prolongs the prime, and both delays and ameliorates the decline.

Our missionaries, here in the open field of hard work, demonstrate the wholesome effect of compliance with the laws of health as revealed by the Author of life. Elders now labouring or having recently served in Great Britain range from eighteen to seventy-six years of age, and not one of them has shown unfitness through physical weakness incident to immaturity or debility due to advanced years.

In the week before last a small company of missionaries, each of them honourably released after two years or more of devoted service, sailed from these shores for their homes in the Great West. Among them was ELDER EVAN ARTHUR, a vigorous youth now in his sixty-fifth year. Since July 1924 Elder Arthur has laboured untiringly and unceasingly as a traveling missionary, imbued with such earnestness and zeal as to attract and even compel respectful attention. After a few weeks spent in the Manchester Conference he was transferred to Wales, the land of his nativity and undying affection. He has traveled afoot, literally all over that principality, distributing gospel literature, preaching and singing his way into the hearts and homes of the people, in village, town and city, from the deepest valley to Snowdon's peak, in the miner's cottage, the farmer's substantial home, and the mansion of the wealthy. As to the activities shown on statistical reports, such as hours spent in tracting,

printed matter sold or given, and the like, Brother Arthur has set a record for the Mission. He holds the office of a Seventy in the Priesthood. Highly gifted as a musician, he has been in congenial atmosphere in the land of the bards. His beloved Wales has been enriched by his aggressive yet persuasive ministry.

ELDER FREDERICK LANGTON, who likewise left for his Utah home two weeks ago, was the oldest young man in the field, having completed his seventy-sixth year last March. Elder Langton accepted the Gospel in the late sixties, and has served on two missions prior to that just completed, the first having begun in 1896, the second in 1905, and on each of these he laboured in the London Conference. Brother Langton last arrived in this country on the 27th of June 1924, and was assigned to the Manchester Conference, from which, however, after about two months he was transferred to the district of his earlier service, the great London Conference. Elder Langton is a High Priest in the Church. His great experience as Traveling Elder and presiding officer in the mission field, together with that of varied and efficient service in responsible positions in ward and stake activities at home, has given him a power of good influence by which multitudes, both members and non-members of the Church, have been blessed. His brotherly sympathy and fatherly affection have endeared him to fellow missionaries, resident members, and friendly investigators, and, in fact, to all with whom he has had to deal.

Traveling in company with these distinguished veterans of the service was ELDER DEVIRL B. STEWART, who received his well-earned and honourable release after labouring in the London Conference since June 1924. He served successively and with marked efficiency as traveling missionary, conference clerk, and President of the London Conference. Elder Stewart made an enviable record as military instructor during the troubled years of the Great War; he is a graduate of the University of Utah, holding the degree of Bachelor of Science. His wife, Sister Grace Nixon Stewart, spent the period of her husband's mission as a student of dramatic art in London, where she won high honours. She is also a graduated B. Sc. and is widely known as a speaker and reader of rare ability.

ELDER HAROLD H. BENNETT, his wife, Sister Emily H. Bennett, and their infant son sailed as members of the same goodly company. Brother Bennett filled a splendid mission in this country in 1920-22, during which time he laboured in the London and Liverpool Conferences, and has been prominent in Church activities at home. The time of his last sojourn in London has been occupied in specialised study in voice culture. He is known as one of the sweetest and most impressive of the singers in modern Israel.

Whether yet in their teens or with the experience of many

decades to enrich their lives, the missionary Elders of the Church are men of action, clean in body and mind, and veritable sources of energy, physical, mental, and spiritual. Young or older, they demonstrate in the mission field the prime of years.—J. E. T.

THE FALL CONFERENCES

DISTRICT CONFERENCES are scheduled to begin on Sunday, September 5th, and to continue at weekly intervals until December 12th. As heretofore, the first service of each will be largely of Sunday School character. Recollection of the excellent programs rendered in connection with past conferences gives assurance of yet greater success in the series about to begin.

In addition to arrangements for the three public services of conference Sunday, provision should be made for a Relief Society meeting, and for an assembly of the local bearers of the Priesthood with the missionaries, or for a Union meeting to include these and all officers of the auxiliary organizations. Where conditions are favourable these special meetings may be held on Saturday evening. If the Relief Society meeting is appointed for Sunday, care should be taken to prevent other activities of the sisters, such as the preparation and serving of lunches, interfering with their attendance.

It is desired that the Conference President prepare a report, embodying all important facts as to work done in the conference district during the six months last preceding, this report to be read at one of the public meetings, and a copy thereof to be furnished to Mission headquarters for permanent preservation. The report should include statement of changes in the personnel of missionaries, list of branches, areas covered by missionaries, general statement of increase or decrease in tithes and offerings, accessions by baptism, prospects for further work, recommendations with a view to increasing the efficiency of missionary effort, and all other matters of importance relating to the Conference. This course was followed in some of the districts during the last series of Spring conferences and even earlier; and the good results demonstrate the advisability of making the procedure general.—J. E. T.

WORD FROM NORWAY

ON JULY 21ST we welcomed President James E. Talmage and Sister May Booth Talmage to the Norwegian Mission on their arrival at Oslo from Stockholm, Sweden. That night they addressed a meeting of the Mutual Improvement Association. On the 24th a splendid program was presented, this also under M. I. A. auspices, in celebration of Pioneer Day, commemorating

the arrival of the vanguard of the Latter-day Saint hosts in the Valley of the Great Salt Lake, away back in 1847. President Martin Christophersen, who presides over the Norwegian Mission, and our honoured visitors from England, made very impressive addresses following the banquet, which had been served in true Norwegian style.

The following day, Sunday, was wholly taken up with Church services; and at each of the three public meetings there was a large attendance of inquirers and investigators, in addition to members resident in Oslo and others from distant branches. President Talmage, who spoke at each of the meetings, treated the subject of "Gospel Dispensations" in a progressive way, and demonstrated by scriptural and other historical data that, from the Adamic to the present, every dispensation has been opened by a new revelation as to the nature and attributes of God, and that the decline of spiritual gifts in each dispensational period has been due to loss of knowledge as to the true nature of God, this state of ignorance being the result of transgression. Sister Talmage, who is President of the Relief Societies of the European Missions, expressed the gratitude she felt for knowledge as to the Gospel of Jesus Christ and for membership in His Church now restored to earth. President Christophersen testified in a most impressive way to the effect of the gospel message as preached in Norway, the land of his birth, and to the earnest devotion of his countrymen, at least such of them as will put aside their inherited prejudice and investigate for themselves. On the 26th a meeting of missionaries occupied several hours, and was marked by detailed instruction and fervent testimony.

On the 27th, President and Sister Talmage, President Christophersen, and the Mission Secretary, arrived in Trondhjem, at midnight but in daylight. The party received a hearty greeting from the missionaries and some resident members at the station. Next day a missionary meeting in the afternoon and a general assembly in the evening were held to the blessing of all who attended. Sister Talmage addressed herself particularly to the women, encouraging them to live according to gospel precepts, and expressing the hope that the Gospel would continue to bring joy into their lives as it brings such to her. Dr. Talmage followed with a strong discourse on what people generally understand and what the Scriptures really mean by "the end of the world", citing the Lord's words that "this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." But, as the speaker demonstrated, every ending is a beginning in the development of the Lord's purposes. President Christophersen dwelt upon the responsibilities resting upon men who bear the holy Priesthood, and encouraged both missionaries and local workers to yet greater diligence.

On Sunday, August 1st, Presidents Talmage and Christophersen and Sister Talmage reached Narvik, after three days journey by coasting steamer, traversing the principal fjords and touching at many isolated towns and villages along the mountainous and greatly indented coast. The happiness of our people in Narvik over this visit by their presiding officers was beyond description. Elder Hyrum L. Jensen is the sole missionary from Zion there labouring. Brother Jensen, and the local president, Elder Emil Evensen, who has spent several years in Utah, expressed the appreciation of the people in having one of the Apostles, the Mission President, and the head of the women's organisations of the European Missions amongst them. At the fast meeting on this Sunday the infant son of Branch President Emil Evensen and wife was blessed and named by Apostle Talmage. Public meetings were held at Narvik both Sunday and Monday evenings, and interested investigators were present on each of these occasions. All the visitors gave inspirational and encouraging addresses. The redactor, or editor, of one of the local papers, the "Fremover", was in attendance, and an excellent article relating to the distinguished visitors and the work of the Church appeared in his columns next day. There was no darkness during the stay of the party in this, the most northerly place on the globe at which a branch of the Church is established, for although the season was slightly too far advanced to permit an actual view of the sun at midnight, the bright glow of the solar beams continued during the few hours of its passing below the horizon. The parting between the good people of the far north and the visitors was emotionally strong.

On the return journey the vessel halted at Alesund, and the party drove out to the residence of the local president, Brother Nils Anderson, where a consultation was held regarding Church activities. A second visit to Trondhjem was made on August 5th, and thence the party, now joined by the Mission Secretary, proceeded to Bergen, where, on the evening of the 7th a Priesthood meeting was held. On Sunday, August 8th, public meetings occupied forenoon and evening, and the afternoon was devoted to a missionary assembly. Beside the Elders from Zion, six local missionaries reported, all of whom are devoting their full time to the service.

At the evening meeting Dr. Talmage stressed the importance of obedience to the divine requirements upon which salvation is predicated, and bore solemn witness to the divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ as the literal Son of the Eternal Father, to the certainty of the nearness of the Lord's second coming, and to the world-important fact that Joseph Smith was verily the Lord's prophet. Sister Talmage showed by many concrete instances that blessings of inestimable worth had come to the world through the life, labours, and martyrdom of the Prophet Joseph Smith. Presi-

dent Christophersen gave a concise summary of the important instructions imparted by the earlier speakers, and added his testimony to the genuineness of this Church as that of the Christ and not a creation of men.

The evening of Monday, August 9th, witnessed the last meeting of the tour. This was held under Relief Society auspices, but was general in character. Closing addresses of very impressive kind were given by the visitors, and divine blessing was invoked upon the work of the Church in Norway. Next day President and Sister Talmage sailed for England, leaving with the people such spirit and influence as shall long endure for good throughout the Norwegian Mission.

BORGHILD E. NIELSEN, Mission Secretary

GOSPEL TEACHINGS

(Concluded from page 551)

And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.—Isa. 2: 2, 3. See also Micah 4: 1, 2.

Even more definite than the Biblical prophecies, however, are predictions relating to the latter-day Zion uttered by the oracles of God who ministered on the American continent centuries prior to the Saviour's advent. Ether, a Jaredite prophet who lived many centuries before Christ's birth, taught his people and left his testimony in graven record when he died, that America was the place of the New Jerusalem (or Zion) that should come down from heaven. He also made known to the Jaredites the sanctity of the Western Continent as a foreappointed land for people who would observe the laws of righteousness. (See Book of Mormon, Ether 2: 7-10, 13: 2-6.)

To the Nephites the Lord gave this far-reaching and blessed promise:

But behold, this land, said God, shall be a land of thine inheritance, and the Gentiles shall be blessed upon the land.

And this land shall be a land of liberty unto the Gentiles, and there shall be no kings upon the land, who shall raise up unto the Gentiles.

And I will fortify this land against all other nations.

And he that fighteth against Zion shall perish, saith God.

For he that raiseth up a king against me shall perish, for I, the Lord, the king of heaven, will be their king, and I will be a light unto them forever, that hear my words.—Book of Mormon, 2 Nephi 10: 10-14.

LATTER-DAY REVELATION CONCERNING ZION. As early as July, 1831, the Lord spoke concerning the Zion that is to be:

Hearken, O ye elders of my church, saith the Lord your God, who have

assembled yourselves together, according to my commandments, in this land, which is the land of Missonri, which is the land which I have appointed and consecrated for the gathering of the saints.

Wherefore, this is the land of promise, and the place for the city of Zion.—Doctrines and Covenants 57: 1, 2.

Just how far the boundaries of Zion should extend was not then generally known; but all queries were quietened when at a general conference of the Church held in April, 1844, the Prophet Joseph Smith delivered the following:

You know there has been great discussion in relation to Zion—where it is, and where the gathering of the dispensation is, and which I am now going to tell you. The prophets have spoken and written upon it; but I will make a proclamation that will cover a broader ground. The whole of America is Zion itself from north to south, and is described by the prophets, who declare that it is the Zion where the mountain of the Lord should be, and that it should be in the center of the land.

Concerning the stakes of Zion he said:

I have received instructions from the Lord that from henceforth wherever the Elders of Israel shall build up churches and branches unto the Lord throughout the States, there shall be a stake of Zion.

PREPARATION OF THE LAND OF ZION. From the days of the flood America has been a chosen land. The Jaredites who went forth from the tower of Babel and all the peoples who have inhabited the Western Continent were told of the Lord that it was the land of promise, and that all who would prosper in it must obey His commandments. The Lord has been very jealous of the land of America. As He decreed, so it has been; nations have been swept from the face thereof because of their wickedness, a remnant only being spared that His purpose might be fulfilled.

The Constitution of the United States is a sacred document and was framed by just men whom the Lord raised up for that purpose, that the liberties of the people might be preserved, and that His Church might be established on the land. So spake the Lord through the Prophet Joseph Smith, saying:

Therefore, it is not right that any man should be in bondage one to another.

And for this purpose have I established the Constitution of this land, by the hands of wise men whom I raised up unto this very purpose, and redeemed the land by the shedding of blood.—Doctrines and Covenants 101: 79, 80.

A PREPARED PEOPLE. None but the righteous can inhabit the land for any lengthened period. The Lord has been preparing a people who would lend their best efforts in making it a land of Zion—a home for “the pure in heart.” From the rise of His Church He has tested and proved its members to see whether or not they would abide by His word.

Faithful Latter-day Saints strive to live and teach the Gospel of love and peace, that faith may be found in the earth when Christ shall come to reign as King of kings and Lord of lords, when the law shall go forth from Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

To this modern Zion the hearts of Latter-day Saints turn with hope and longing from the time they accept the Gospel. From many lands and climes, thousands have been gathered; the faithful have found it to be a "choice land above all other lands, a chosen land of the Lord."

And blessed are they who shall seek to bring forth my Zion at that day, for they shall have the gift and the power of the Holy Ghost; and if they endure unto the end they shall be lifted up at the last day, and shall be saved in the everlasting kingdom of the Lamb; and whoso shall publish peace, yea, tidings of great joy, how beautiful upon the mountains shall they be.—Book of Mormon, 1 Nephi 13: 37.

DISCUSSION

1. Tell what you can about the meaning of the term "Zion."
2. Give the geographical location of the two gathering places.
3. How do we know that America is the land of Zion?
4. Cite one or more scriptural passages or prophecies concerning Zion. Cite passages not contained in lesson.
5. Name some of the blessings that have come to Latter-day Saints through their gathering to the land of Zion.

FROM THE MISSION FIELD

Releases and Departures—Elder Reed E. Callister, who has laboured as a Traveling Elder and as President of the Scottish Conference, and Elder John H. Wilson, who has laboured as a Traveling Elder in the Sheffield, Scottish and Nottingham Conferences, have been honourably released to return to their homes in America. They left Liverpool on August 27th by the steamship *Montroyal*.

Doings in the Conferences: Birmingham—On August 17th, at the Handsworth Chapel, Birmingham, Elder Laurence Peterson baptized, and Elders J. Forest Wood and Laurence Peterson confirmed, two new members of the Church. Our labours are meeting with success and bearing fruit.

Hull—On Friday evening, August 20th, one person was baptized by Elder Edward M. Bunker in Beverley "Beck", Hull Conference. President Richard D. Hooper confirmed him a member of the Church.

Leeds—On August 17th, the resident members and Traveling Elders of the Clayton Branch had an enjoyable outing by charabanc to Kuaresborough, where a pleasant afternoon was spent in games and boating.

Words from the Workers: In two weeks, spent recently in the country, we walked approximately one hundred and fifty miles, sold Books of Mormon, and distributed a great many tracts and pamphlets. We found the people generally in a very receptive mood and had very little prejudice to contend with. We returned with our testimonies considerably strengthened and feeling to rejoice in the work.—*From Elders N. Glenn Stanford and Henry R. Price, Manchester Conference.*

During the past three months, with different Elders of this Conference, I have had the good fortune of witnessing great progress in our work as missionaries. Prayers have been answered, friends have been raised up to care for us, our testimonies have been strengthened, and in divers ways we have enjoyed the blessings of our Heavenly Father while engaged in country work. Open-air meetings have been featured with success throughout the district, where the people are daily becoming more receptive. General advancement and personal development in this glorious work are fruits already ripe.—*From Elder Gordon Burt Affleck, Birmingham Conference.*

FROM LOWELL'S "THE PRESENT CRISIS"

New occasions teach new duties ;
 Time makes ancient good uncouth ;
 They must upward still, and onward,
 Who would keep abreast of Truth.
 Lo, before us gleam her campfires !
 We ourselves must Pilgrims be,
 Launch our Mayflower, and steer boldly
 Through the desperate winter sea ;
 Nor attempt the Future's portal
 With the Past's blood-rusted key.

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LIVERPOOL

FOR SALE IN ALL THE CONFERENCES OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF
 LATTER-DAY SAINTS IN GREAT BRITAIN